POL 341: The Rise (and Fall) of New Democracies
Student's Choice Assignment

Deadlines

- Project Proposal due Thursday, February 22 (in class)
- Project due Thursday, March 15 (in class)

Purpose

This assignment gives you an opportunity to research a dimension of our topic – the rise and fall of democracy around the world – and make it relevant and accessible to a broad audience. You will take an aspect of our topic that is of interest to you (a case, a theory, a methodological issue, a finding in the literature, etc.) and expand your knowledge through reading and research to create a shareable product for a specified audience. Examples of shareable products include:

- Video: create a short video/documentary on the topic of your choice. If a traditional video documentary is beyond your time and skills, consider these alternative video options: white board lecture (how-to here), PowerPoint with voice-over (how-to here)
- Web Page: build a web page to inform the public of the topic of interest to you
- Podcast: record a podcast
- Slideshow/image gallery with text (e.g., Instagram)
- Infographic/research poster (how-to here)
- Policy memo: Craft a memo for a policy maker in which you identify a problem, summarize the problem, describe potential actions in response to the problem, and make (and defend) a recommend (I can provide policy memo guidance if you need it.)
- Research proposal: Prepare a literature review (about 5 pages) on your topic and develop a research proposal to advance knowledge of the topic. Your research proposal should include an explanation of your methods, including data collection and analysis, as well as at least one hypothesis that you could test.
- Lead class discussion: Choose a day on the syllabus to lead discussion for 30 to 40 minutes of the class. Develop a lesson plan and facilitate discussion during class.
- Screen and discuss a film: select a relevant film (feature or documentary) and screen for classmates. Lead a discussion about the film for at least 30 minutes.

Project Proposal Guidelines

Write a brief (1 page max) description to "pitch" your project, answering these questions:

- I am interested in learning more about _____ because _____.
- I plan to create a _____ by doing _____.
- My audience for this project is _____.
- Regarding this project, I have questions about or I would appreciate guidance on _____.
- Regarding this project, I am most excited about/to _____.
- Regarding this project I am most worried about/to _____.

<u>Rubric</u>

Your project will be graded according to the following rubric:
- accuracy and precision of information – 25 pts
- quality of argument/analysis – 25 pts
- successful implementation of project design – 15 pts
- accessibility/usefulness to the intended audience – 15 pts
- quality of writing/editing – 10 pts
- works cited for text and images – 10 pts